

Dear Friend,

Today marks the two-year anniversary of the Deepwater Horizon disaster. On April 20, 2010, the oil rig exploded, killing 11 workers. The platform soon collapsed beneath the water's surface, but over the course of the following 87 days, more than four million barrels of oil spewed from the blown-out Macondo well, coating nearly 1,000 miles of Gulf coastline and temporarily closing more than 88,000 square miles of some of the nation's most productive fishing grounds.

The Deepwater Horizon tragedy was a wake-up call, but some of my colleagues seem to have missed the sound of the alarm. In the two years since the disaster, I have offered bills to implement the safety recommendations of the National Commission on the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill. I also have introduced the Big Oil Bailout Prevention Act to make sure that oil companies pay the full cost of damages resulting from future oil spills. Unfortunately, the Republican majority has refused to allow these much-needed reforms to be considered by the House of Representatives.

We owe the families of those killed two years ago a serious examination of the lessons learned in order to ensure that the ongoing drilling in the Gulf is as safe as possible. We owe the families and workers who depend on the coastal resources of New Jersey and elsewhere a promise that a similar accident will never take place off of their shores.

Free Student Aid Workshop on Monday, April 30

Do you have concerns about affording higher education? On Monday, April 30, at 7 p.m., I will be organizing a free Student Aid Workshop for high school students and their parents in conjunction with the New Jersey Higher Education Student Assistance Authority and Rutgers University. The workshop will be held at the South Brunswick Public Library, 110 Kingston Lane in Monmouth Junction.

Experts will be on hand to offer information on financial aid opportunities at the federal, state, and campus levels, including Pell Grants, Perkins Loans, and scholarship programs offered by

the State of New Jersey. They will also be glad to answer your questions and provide information about your own financial aid situation.

For more information, please contact Andrew Black of my staff at (609) 750-9365 or andrew.black@mail.house.gov

Celebrate National Park Week: Visit Any National Park for Free

Wallace Stegner, the famed Western writer and historian, once said that national parks are "the best idea we've ever had. Absolutely American, absolutely democratic, they reflect us at our best rather than our worst." And next week, you'll have the opportunity to visit any of America's 397 national parks – and any of the hundreds of battlefields, historic places, and other associated sites managed by the National Park Service – without paying any entrance fee.

National Park Week 2012 runs from this Saturday, April 21, through Sunday, April 29. It presents a great opportunity to visit any of [New Jersey's national parks](#), including America's newest national park,

[Paterson Great Falls National Historical Park](#)

. Many

[other parks](#)

are within easy driving distance.

To learn more about National Park Week and to plan your trip, visit NationalParkWeek.org.

Sincerely,

Rush Holt
Member of Congress